

Rationale for Practice Portfolio

Title: A True Band of Brothers

Grade: 12

Year released: 2008

Reflective Entry Title: The Essay

2 Content (2, 2, 2)

The writing attempts to establish and maintain the narrowed focus of 'creativity' by the introductory quote and the ideas in the introductory paragraph. There are lapses in this focus evident within this personal essay. While the writing demonstrates some voice (e.g., "The need for creativity grew like a ravenous monster..."), the ideas are sometimes unelaborated and indicate only some awareness of the audience's needs. Likewise, some details do not seem necessary to further the established focus.

3 Structure (3, 3, 3)

The writing demonstrates effective transitions (e.g., "as I," "after gaining," "in the later years," and "the point is"). These transitional elements contribute to the logical, coherent organization. The sentence structure demonstrates control. The structure of this piece accurately illustrates the differences between lapses in focus (Content) and lapses in structure. Overall, the writing flows from one paragraph to the next.

3 Conventions (3, 3, 3)

Though there are examples of imprecise words (e.g., "transgressed"), overall the word choice is acceptable. This writing sample demonstrates control of grammar, usage, and correctness.

Instructional Implications

Teachers may use this sample to demonstrate lessons on:

- focus in a reflective entry for the portfolio.
- How titles help to establish focus (or how titles may detract from establishing focus).
- how providing too many ideas or details may sometimes lead to lapses in focus.
- the difference between lapses in focus and lapses in structure.

Portfolio Title: A True Band of Brothers

Personal OR Literary Entry Title: A True Band of Brothers

2 Content (2, 2, 2)

The title shows an attempt to establish a purpose; however, the introductory paragraph demonstrates a lapse in focus. The introduction seems disconnected, and though it serves as an attempt to engage the audience, the weak comparison only serves to confuse readers (e.g., "I was a lot like those yeast. . ."). At times, the details are unelaborated, and irrelevant (e.g., "When I told Mrs. A____, my previous teacher and assistant band director, she had a cow"). Difficulties with idea development contribute to the demonstration of only some awareness of audience's needs.

2 Structure (2, 2, 3)

There is a logical organizational pattern within the writing; however, the organization lapses in coherence. Though there are some effective transitional elements (e.g., "as the week progressed slowly," "later that night," "throughout the entirely grueling process," and "after a couple of months"), the insufficient use of transitional elements contributes to lapses in coherence as well. Overall, the writing demonstrates control and variety of sentence structure.

2 Conventions (2, 3, 2)

Overall, the writing demonstrates only some control of grammar and usage (e.g., "Jeremy and myself," the use of "loose" for "lose," and the use of "confident" for "confidence") and some control of correctness (e.g., misuse of commas and spelling errors—example "gong" for "going"). Though there are some examples of simplistic and imprecise words and phrases (e.g., "had a cow"), the word choice is, overall, acceptable.

Instructional Implications

Teachers may use this sample to demonstrate lessons on:

- the need for relevant introductory material.
- the need for sufficient elaboration in a narrative.
- lessons on comma usage and transitional elements.

Portfolio Title: A True Band of Brothers

Transactive Entry Title: Untitled

2 Content (2, 2, 2)

This letter to the editor attempts to establish a narrowed purpose by suggesting that the young people have no reason to stay in ____ County as they enter their adult lives. However, the shifts among paragraphs to farming, arts and music venues, and businesses cause lapses in focus. While these ideas may be an attempt to further develop potential solutions to encourage people to stay, this is not clear from the writing. The letter ends with the writer's recommendation that the community should put forth effort in providing entertainment for their children. The writing demonstrates only some awareness of audience's needs by drifting from one idea to the other. There are also difficulties with idea development as many of the details don't relate to the original purpose. While the writer attempts to apply some characteristics of the letter genre through formatting, the characteristics of a letter to the editor are only partially evident within the body of the writing.

2 Structure (2, 2, 3)

There are some effective internal transitional elements within the writing (e.g., "unfortunately," "if that were to happen," and "also"). However, the insufficient use of transitions between paragraphs causes a lapse in coherence in organization. Overall, the writing demonstrates control and variety in sentence structure.

3 Conventions (3, 2, 3)

Though not without errors, this letter to the editor demonstrates overall control of grammar, usage, and correctness. The writing demonstrates simplistic word choice throughout (e.g., "the drop in teen pregnancies and drug use are *good things*," "to create a *large interest*," and "but it's now time to *look into helping* the county grow and develop").

Instructional Implications

Teachers may use this sample to demonstrate lessons on:

- focusing on a purpose throughout a piece of writing.
- developing necessary, relevant ideas to further a purpose and focus.
- Expectations for characteristics of the genre internal to the writing.

Portfolio Title: A True Band of Brothers

Transactive Entry Title: The Paper
(with analytical or technical Focus—12th only)

2 Content (2, 2, 2)

This movie review attempts to establish a purpose of reviewing the movie The Paper by drawing in readers in the introductory paragraph (“In everyday life the media covers stories. . .” to “Many people often never think about it, but the media goes through a lot to get their big scoops. The Paper shows a day in the life of a newspaper reporter”), but this purpose is not analytical or technical. The writing demonstrates some awareness of the audience’s needs (e.g., “The Paper is a good movie for those who have ever been interested in working on a newspaper staff. . .”). There are lapses in focus, however, throughout the writing and the idea development is not sufficient to fully develop a purpose of a review. Lapses are evident when discussing the other characters in the movie and their relationships with one another. Characteristics of the movie review genre are only partially evident as there is more summary than review.

2 Structure (2, 2, 2)

There is a sense of organization in this writing, but there are lapses in coherence throughout. Some paragraphs could be moved around without changing meaning. There are some effective transitions evident within the review (e.g., “in,” “when,” and “another”). The writing demonstrates only some control of sentence structure (e.g., “In everyday life the media covers stories that seem almost like they could only happen in the movies such a murder trial or a drug bust and every day the reporters work hard to take the information they’ve acquired to make a story” and “. . .; as well as Randy Quaid who plays MacDougal, the street beat reporter who somehow gets the answers no one else can seem to find”).

2 Conventions (3, 2, 2)

Overall, the writing demonstrates control of grammar and usage. There are many examples of simplistic and imprecise word choice (e.g., “love endeavors,” “upcoming death,” and “goes through a lot to get the big scoop”). Errors in punctuation do not interfere with communication (e.g., misuse of semi-colon, missing commas).

Instructional Implications

Teachers may use this sample to demonstrate lessons on:

- genre of a movie, book, art, or other type of review and the need for a strong focus for a review.
- how to improve a review by limiting mere summary (for the sake of summary) and instead, integrating summary or plot within to provide reasoning for a positive or negative review to inform or persuade an audience.